

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application is requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claim 15 has been canceled. Claims 1 and 14 have been amended. Support for the amendments to claim 1 can be found at least page 18, lines 26-35 of the present specification. Claim 14 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of canceled claim 15.

Claims 1 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Moro, U.S. 5,053,813. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Moro discloses an image forming apparatus that includes a glass original table 2, a control panel 9 provided in front of the machine, and a first copy-start key 14 provided at the right end of the control panel 9. The first key 14 is always operable, and any operator can use it any time to operate the apparatus. A second copy-start key 15 is provided at a position adjacent to the left side of the original table 2. The second key 15 is not operable all the time, and is enabled only when a specified condition, such as the entry of a user code via the control panel 9, is satisfied. When performing ordinary copying, an original Q is placed on the original table 2 and the operator presses the first key 14. In this case, the second key 15 has been disabled with use of key 14. The second key 15 is enabled by entering an ID number into the control panel 9. The use of second key 15 is necessary when a thick book is used as an original to be copied. With the book copy mode selected from the control panel 9, and the book pressed firmly against the glass original table 2, an operator can operate the second key 15 using the left little finger of the operator as shown in Figure 3 (see column 2, lines 10-56 of Moro).

Moro fails to disclose or suggest that use of one of the first or second keys 15, 14 carries out required reproduction more reliably than use of the other key. The keys 14 and 15 disclosed by Moro are useful for different circumstances when copying different articles and the device is set in specific modes by the operator, but there is no disclosure or suggestion by Moro that one or the other key 14, 15 activates a mode that is more reliable in carrying out required reproductions than the other key.

Furthermore, Moro fails to disclose or suggest the use of "a safety priority mode capable of carrying out the required reproduction up to a permitted number of reproductions," as required by claim 1. Moro fails to disclose both a required reproduction and a permitted number of reproductions, or that required reproductions are made and/or limited in number by a permitted number of reproductions. Still further, Moro fails to disclose a safety priority mode separate from a performance priority mode wherein one or the other mode carries out "the required reproduction up to the permitted number of reproductions more reliably" than the other mode, as required by claim 1. Therefore, Applicants submit that Moro fails to disclose or suggest every limitation of claim 1 and the claims that depend from it.

Claims 33 and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Moro and further in view of Ujiie, U.S. 5,115,273. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. As discussed above, Moro fails to disclose or suggest every limitation of claim 1. Ujiie fails to remedy the deficiencies of Moro as it relates to claim 1. Therefore, claims 33 and 35 are allowable for at least the reason they are dependent upon an allowable base claim. Applicants do not concede the correctness of this rejection.

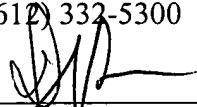
Claim 14 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Obata, U.S. 6,285,843. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. As noted above, claim 14 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 15. Therefore, claim 14 is in condition for allowance. Applicants do not concede the correctness of this rejection.

In view of the above, Applicants request reconsideration of the application in the form of a Notice of Allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

MERCHANT & GOULD P.C.
P.O. Box 2903
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-0903
(612) 332-5300

Date: January 23, 2004



Douglas P. Mueller
Reg. No. 30,300
DPM/JNR:ae